

~~RUSSELL, FRANK~~

INTERVIEW

#9351

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BIOGRAPHICAL  
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION  
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

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INTERVIEW

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Field Worker's name John F. Daugherty

This report made on (date) December 30, 1937

1. Name Frank Russell (colored)

2. Post office Address Davis, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) \_\_\_\_\_

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month unknown Day unknown Year 1867

5. Place of birth Soggy Depot in the Choctaw Nation, Indian Territory

6. Name of Father William Russell Place of birth Indian Territory

Other information about father Farmer - Hunter

7. Name of Mother Lindy James Place of birth Indian Territory

Other information about mother \_\_\_\_\_

Notes or complete narrative by the field worker dealing with the life and story of the person interviewed. Refer to Manual for suggested checks and questions. Continue on blank sheets if necessary and attach firmly to this form. Number of sheets attached 4

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John F. Daugherty,  
Investigator,  
December 26, 1937.

An Interview with Mr. Frank Russell,  
Davis, Oklahoma.

My parents were William Russell and Lindy James Russell, both born near Boggy Depot in the Choctaw Nation.

Father was a farmer and hunter. There were five children in our family. I was born at Boggy Depot in 1867. Father moved on Wild Horse Creek west of Davis when I was a small lad. I went to school at Fort Arbuckle. This was a Government school.

While I was a young boy Father hired me to Brad Camp to care for his children. As soon as I was large enough to ride after cattle Mr. Camp put me on the range, and I worked for him many years.

One night we were sitting in the hall of his ranch house when two men appeared from the darkness.

I grabbed my gun, and one of them said, "Would you let the 'nigger' kill us?"

Brad replied that he had "raised" me to kill men.

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They asked if they might get supper and spend the night there. Brad permitted them to do this. The next morning after they had eaten breakfast they rode away. They had not been gone but a few minutes until three men from Texas rode up to the house. Then we discovered that our guests of the night before were horse thieves and these other men were looking for them. They asked me to accompany them. We went in the direction the horse thieves had taken and soon came upon them hidden in the underbrush on Wild Horse Creek. When we left them, they hung to the limb of a tree, and the men took their horses and went back to Texas.

That was the punishment which thieves often received in those days. Methods of travel and communication were so slow that thieves often had a chance to escape before the law could take its course. So a posse took no chances and when the thief for whom they were looking was found he usually paid with his life.

After I was married I carried the mail on horseback from Old Ashita to Hennepin west of Davis, three times a week. I received \$60.00 a year.

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I was a deputy under Constable Parks at Davis for a number of years. One morning Mr. Parks came by my house and asked if I would help to trail a horse thief. He told me the kind of horse the thief was riding and the direction in which he was traveling. We all rode for a distance, and when we came to the Washita River we separated. I went alone on one side of the river.

I came to a crossing and I could see that somebody had just ridden through the water. I found the horse tracks and followed them into the timber. I found the man for whom we were looking. Since I was a colored man he didn't realize that I was a deputy. I asked him if he would trade that horse. He replied that he would and I told him the horse I wished to trade was at Davis, but we could go and look at him. He replied that he had to get on to Texas.

About that time he got off his horse. I sensed trouble and I got off my horse, throwing my gun on him. He looked very surprised. I frisked him and took his

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gun. By that time Mr. Parks and the posse were there, and the horse was returned to its owner, while the thief was taken to jail.

I was married to Agnes Williams, a Chickasaw Freedman. We didn't have any license. The minister who married us recorded the ceremony with the Conference.

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